The Cheerful Letter

Every place a church; every day the Lord's day; all events blessings; all joy thanksgiving; and all nature and life full of Good.—James Freeman Clarke.

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THE HILLS AHEAD

The hills ahead look hard and steep and high.
Often we behold them with a sigh;
But as we near them, level grows the road,
We find on every slope, with every load,
The climb is not so steep, the top so far.
The hills ahead look harder than they are.

And so it is with troubles, though they seem so great
That men complain, and fear, and hesitate.
Less difficult the journey than we dreamed,
It never proves as hard as once it seemed.
There never comes a hill, a task, a day,
But, as we near it, easier the way.

—By Courtesy of "Inklings."

DON'T GIVE UP

HOWEVER hard the task, or rough the road, or dark the outlook, don't give up. To the man of courage, difficulties serve to stimulate and enlist the highest efforts of which he is capable. Your physical and mental powers grow best in the exercise of useful work.

If discouragement assails you, don't give up. Direct your mind to uplifting and constructive thought. Soon your depression will dissolve into nothingness. The best time to annihilate worry is when it first appears. Strike quickly, and the victory is yours. Health and happiness are primarily mental. Repeated right thoughts will produce right conditions in your life.

If debt threatens you, don't give up. Make a definite plan to discharge it even by small degrees. Look at it courageously, and determine to rid yourself of it and thereafter to keep from debt. Economize in every possible way. Keep a stout heart, work diligently, have a clear goal before you, and bend every energy toward the desired achievement. Courage kills despair.

If failure stares you in the face, don't give up. Work on with greater zeal. The valiant man recognizes no such thing as failure. He regards mistakes and misfortunes as practical lessons in self-discipline and wisdom. Successful men have often used seeming failures as stepping-stones to better things. Remember that right effort, industry, and earnestness ultimately bring sure reward.

If friends forsake you, don't give up. Fill well your part, and let your good work speak for itself. Excuse is weakness. Do not blame others for your mistakes. Cultivate a fine sense of independence that will sustain you in the midst of disaster. Be greater to yourself than you are to other men. Let your first aim be to merit your own respect. It will automatically follow that you will win the respect of other men.

If loss confronts you, don't give up. Others have lost before, and have turned the experience to profitable account. Prove the greatness of the qualities within you by new and enthusiastic effort. Right where you are at this moment is the place to begin again, and to translate your good desires into actual deeds. Never before have you had so many fin opportunities and incentives for reall great achievement.

If sickness smites you, don't gi Take all available means to get w have faith that you will be well. icent power co-operates wit you think constructively cally. Gratitude is a heal

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fulness and right living are vital elements of good health. Right thinking gives the creative strength with which to build a sane and healthy life.

If sorrow overtakes you, don't give up. Patience and self-sacrifice are often necessary to meet the responsibilities and difficulties that beset the daily path. Properly developed patience and self-sacrifice will help you to meet the emergencies of life. The practical value of your beliefs and principles may be suddenly put to the test. Be ready for such occasions by developing nobility and sturdiness of character.

If life seems hard and all the world set against you, don't give up. If you lose your money, your job, your material possessions, your friends, don't give up. Start in again, with head erect, clear vision, and bulldog determination. Rouse yourself—take a new hold on life. And no matter what happens, *don't give up!*

If the road is rough,
And the journey steep,
If you find it hard
The pace to keep,
Don't give up!
If you seem to lose
When you ought to win,
If the feeling comes
That you must give in,
Don't give up!
If all the world
Seems hard, unjust—
Keep close to God
And in Him trust.
Don't give up!

—By GRENVILLE KLEISER
in *Signs of the Times.*

THE "PULL OF GOD"

SAUL knew just what he wanted. That is why most of us can understand his story. He had a mind of his own, a will of his own, and he had started out for Damascus determined to carry out his own idea. After all, he was certain that these new-fangled Christians should be punished and persecuted. They were upsetting the old-time Jewish religion. They were even saying that the leaders of the old religion had made a terrible mistake and had murdered God's Son Who later rose from the dead. Saul was not going to stand for anything like that—he was going to defend the old religion.

But, deep in his heart, something was drawing Saul in the opposite direction. Down deep within him the tide was setting in the other direction, making it harder and harder for him to persecute Christians, making it easier and easier for him to see God in the life and death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. For Jesus Christ had laid hold of Saul, and would not let go—and, finally, as you have just read in Acts, it was Saul who let go; it was Saul who gave in to the Unseen Christ, and let Him command his life. And, a few chapters later in Acts, you will find the Christians giving him a new name. It was Paul now, instead of Saul—once he had given in to the pull of Christ on his heart, only a new name would do for a new man!

Sometimes we wonder about God—sometimes He does not seem as real and as close as we wish. Sometimes a friend says, "How do you know that there is any God?" A young man once asked Professor Bosworth why he believed in God. Professor Bosworth replied, "Once I saw a boy flying a kite which had gone so high that it could not be seen; so I said to him, 'How do you know that there is any kite there at all?' and he answered, as quick as a flash, 'I feel the pull of it.'" When you feel that pull on your heart, be sure that it is God drawing you, as He drew Saul, away from your own wilfulness, to do something for Him. And, if you are wise, you will let go, and let Him have His way with you.

—*Contributed.*

QUIET MOMENTS WITH THE PSALMIST

Psalms 42, 43—*Hope Though in Exile*

TAKEN together, as they should be, these two psalms present a poem of three stanzas, each closing with the same refrain. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" asks the psalmist, "and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Psalm 42:11. Thrice this refrain occurs.

David is a lonely king in exile. Absalom, his son, has rebelled. Psalm 42 is the cry of a man cut off from the worship of God, longing for communion in the house of the Lord. Applied to the present-day Christian, it is the cry of the believer, beset by fears and doubts, longing for the satisfaction of God's presence, but withal holding firm his faith in his heavenly Father.

To show the utter dejection of the soul severed from fellowship with his brethren in the worship of God, David chooses the striking figure of the poor hart perishing for want of water—his soul is thirsty for his God. And this thirst for the things of God becomes more poignant as he recalls happier days. "A sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things." In this spirit of despondency, his better nature comes to the front and he talks as it were to himself. In heaven-born confidence, he bids his soul to trust in God, who is the health of his countenance. This is the thrice-sung refrain.

The second stanza (42:6-11) again portrays a cast-down soul, but this time the despondency seems less heavy. From his exile in the land of Jordan, from the wild mountain fastnesses of Hermon, from the little hill of Mizar, from the depths of the sea of trouble in which he had been well-nigh overwhelmed, the psalmist remembers the loving-kindness of the Lord and chides himself for worrying about the difficulties around him. He is sure of God's goodness by day and by night. Why should his soul be cast down?

The third stanza (43:1-5) lifts the song to a higher note of hope. God is the psalmist's strength; and in that strength he will some day return to the tabernacle of God in company with a multitude of those who keep holy day. Aye, more, his return will be with exceeding gladness. God will be his joy. Why then—the refrain is again repeated—should he be cast down, when God is the soul's strength and health and joy—its all in all?

It is said that Psalm 42 was a favorite with the early Christians when they were hunted in the catacombs. (The hart is a common emblem on the walls of these underground passages.) In our temporary exile from God's heavenly house, hunted and oppressed and tempted by foes without and within, let us cling fast to the One who is the health of our countenance and our God. "Blessed are they which do . . . thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."

—By CHARLES E. WENIGER
in *Signs of the Times.*

"These are the things I have prayed for, Lord,
A few small things Your grace alone can give:
The strength to leave unsaid the bitter word;
The power to say the kind one and forgive
All that is said or done by thoughtless men,
Blinded a little by envy, hate;
The courage to go on and try again
When hopes have failed. The patience, Lord, to wait.
The wisdom to see clearly and to cling
To simple truths, though fame and glory dim;
The faith to make a dream a living thing;
The worthiness of heart to follow Him.
A gentleness of soul, a spirit meek,
The nobler life. These are the things I seek."

—CHRISTINE LUND.

Go on with life another mile,
Lighting the way with kindly smile.
—*Edwin Markham.*

CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

Letters should be addressed to Miss Ethel H. Studley, 56 School Street, Hingham, Mass.

Persons writing to the Department for the first time should ask for an enrollment blank and give as reference the name and address of their minister.

When a correspondent moves to a new address, notice should be sent to Headquarters, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., and to those persons who have been sending letters and reading matter.

It is necessary to state positively that the Cheerful Letter Exchange is not a "clothing bureau" and not a "charitable" society in the usual sense of the word.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of its magazine by addressing letters asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who disobeys this rule will be dropped from the list, and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by the Central Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to the Chairman of this Department.

Many people do care for just the kind of friendly service for which we are organized. We limit our efforts to them and their wishes.

APPEALS

THESE Appeals need not be answered a second time, and we ask you not to take them as *regular correspondents* no matter how appealing may be the acknowledgment for the package. For any exception please address this Department.

1. Mrs. G. L. Blanton, Box 53, Wallace, N. C., gets very lonely, as her husband is away all day, and she would appreciate some books and magazines. She would very much like to receive "Gone with the Wind" and "How to Win Friends and Influence People" if anyone has these to spare.

2. "I am fourteen years old. I have been to the hospital and stayed four months. I can walk some on my crutches. I get very lonely when my brother and sisters are gone to school, and would like to have some singing and things like that, also some toys and some school work. I shall have to go back to the hospital this week. Mary Sue Ledbetter, Mayodan, N. C."

3. Mrs. Rosa V. Lavender lives on a farm in Pleasant View, Va., with a large family. Neither she nor her husband can work much. She would appreciate such things as are useful in quilt-making, knitting, or embroidery.

4. Mrs. Lumie Elliott, Apple Grove, N. C., writes: "I don't think I could do without the Cheerful Letter Magazine, as I do love to read it. I am a shut-in and my eyes are very dim. I should like to have some silk scraps for quilts and some yarn for knitting."

5. Mrs. Blanche Parsons, Lansing, N. C., would like to get some handkerchiefs, short lengths of plain or figured muslin, broadcloth, or any kind of print or silk scraps to help finish her patchwork quilts. She is alone and is not very strong.

6. From Norwood, N. C., Virgie Hilliard writes: "I should appreciate some good reading and some quilt scraps if you could send me some. We are having some pretty weather."

7. Mrs. Charles Owen, Sandy Level, Va., would be glad to have some scraps for her quilt and some embroidery thread.

8. Mrs. Sarah Brim, Madison, N. C., would like some scrap pieces and some hand thread.

9. Mrs. Cleo Brown, Copeland, Ark., gets so lonesome that she would enjoy having a regular correspondent, and would also like some quilt pieces and thread.

10. Mrs. Elsie Tucker, twenty-five years old, would like to have "quilt pieces, thread, or letters and short stories—something to cheer us up." She has a baby girl two years old; she and her husband are both not very strong. Her address is Box 85, Lansing, N. C., R. F. D. 1.

11. Mrs. Thomas Jones, Whitetop, Va., wants some good reading and some embroidery with the necessary equipment. She is fifty-five years old, and her children are thirty-three, thirty-one, and twenty-six years old.

CORRESPONDENTS

LETTERS from any new regular correspondents have been omitted this month owing to the fact that the Department has a long waiting list of shut-ins to be adopted. If any local chairman can adopt an additional name or interest new workers in letter writing please write to Miss Ethel H. Studley, 56 School Street, Hingham, Mass., who is the new chairman of the Department of Correspondents and Appeals.

HOME STUDY

IT has been decided to combine the work of the Home Study Department with that of the Correspondents and Appeals. Letters asking for help in studying at home should be sent to Miss Ethel H. Studley, 56 School Street, Hingham, Mass.

A PRAYER

Lord, in this hour of tumult,
Lord, in this night of fears,
Keep open, oh, keep open
My eyes, my ears!
Not blindly, not in hatred,
Lord, let me do my part;
Keep open, oh, keep open,
My mind, my heart.

—HERMAN HAGEDORN.

The great man is he who does not lose his child's heart.

—*Mencius, a Disciple of Confucius.*

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE
1937-1938

THE annual report of your secretary must be more or less statistical. The monthly reports contain the interesting, personal phases of our work. Much that has been incorporated in these reports will be given you today by the chairmen of the various departments of the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

Eight regular meetings have been held on the first Friday of each month, October to May, inclusive. Miss Sibley has presided at all but the conference in January, when she was visiting in the South, and Miss Studley ably conducted the meeting. The short devotional services with which each meeting opens have been led by the chairman, Miss Sibley; Mrs. Wise, President of the General Alliance; Mrs. Preble, New England Vice-President; Mrs. Hartwell, Secretary, and Miss Langmaid, Chairman of the Fellowship Committee. The Central Committee has held eight meetings on the same day as the regular ones except in September. The business of the Exchange was transacted at these and plans made for special programs during the year.

The first of these special ones was in November, when each chairman of the Central Committee read that part of the "yellow book" which related to her work and answered questions. In December the Christmas spirit was evident. Mrs. Richardson, who had kindly offered her services, sang "Oh, Holy Night." After the reading of appropriate verses from the Bible, all joined in singing "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem." At the January meeting, Miss Coburn, a member of the Central Committee, gave a splendid talk on life in the South, or "The Land of Do Without," as she called it. I hope you all read her article in the Axis on the same subject. The March and April meetings were devoted to an experiment—something in the nature of experience meetings. The branch chairmen were asked to bring short written

reports about their regular work and with adopted schools if they had one. These reports were not to take over two minutes to read. Many interesting facts were brought out and every one seemed to enjoy taking part in the meetings.

The average attendance was just the same as last year, fifty-six members from thirty-six branches. The largest attendance was in November with seventy present from forty-five branches. A very stormy day in January kept the average down. The total attendance for the year was four hundred and forty-six. Waltham heads the list once more with the largest representation, Lexington second, Hingham third and Dorchester First fourth. In addition to these four branches, eight others have had one or more members present at every meeting. These are Boston First, Melrose, Medford, Milton, Roslindale Evening, Roxbury, Westwood and Wollaston. Fifty-nine branches have been represented at one or more meetings. Carbon copies of all reports have been sent to the members of the Central Committee who live too far away to attend.

As usual, questionnaires were sent to all chairmen, this year, two hundred and thirty-nine. The report can not be complete, as eighty-seven have not been returned. From the one hundred and fifty-two received, the information about the Sunshine bags has been sent to Miss Jones, that concerning Home Study to Miss Studley and your reports about Bibles to Mrs. Stone. Every branch chairman should receive the *Cheerful Letter Magazine* each month in order to keep up with the work, yet many chairmen report that they do not take it. Let us hope that next year there will be no one who does the work without the help of our magazine. Many branches pay for extra subscriptions so that the magazine may be sent to our correspondents who can not afford to pay for it. Thirteen branches who can do so, pay for from ten to thirty-six subscriptions.

It has been a pleasure to do this work for you and with the same kind cooperation that has been given me, I am sure that my successor, Mrs. Stone, will enjoy a successful year.

Respectfully submitted,
LOTTIE M. ALLEN,
Secretary.

ANNUAL REPORT OF TREASURER

THE cost of printing, editing, publishing and mailing our valuable messenger —"*The Cheerful Letter Magazine*"—is about $100 a month. This means $1,100 a year. The publication is omitted in August.

To whom is this magazine sent? It *should* be received by every Cheerful Letter Chairman and every member of her committee. Our subscription list also contains the names of a number of "shut-ins" who appreciate, far beyond our imagination, this little paper. These subscriptions are made possible only by your interest to give specially for the "shut-in" list. There are still names waiting to be placed on this special list.

At one time there was grave concern as to how the amount of money necessary to publish the *Cheerful Letter Magazine* could be raised. A committee meeting was called. A suggestion was made to use the yellow Sunshine Bag—one to be given each chairman—the purpose "to collect the dimes and pennies to print the *Cheerful Letter.*"

Permission was given by the National Board of Directors. We lawfully and legally started asking chairmen to cooperate, to use the bag for this express purpose. Please take notice! The Sunshine Bags are to be used for money to help print, edit, publish and mail the *Cheerful Letter Magazine.* Please, lawfully and legally use them for this purpose alone.

We have two hundred thirty-nine Cheerful Letter Committees. One hundred have contributed towards the publishing of the paper, either by the Branches or directly from their treasury or from special individuals.

Grateful acknowledgment is given for those making the contributions and their interest in the "Shut-in" list.

The list of contributions this year is led by Wellesley Hills, Mass., with $31.39; followed by Dorchester, Mass., First Church; West Newton; Roxbury; Boston First; Boston; King's Chapel; New York, All Souls; Lynn; Wollaston; and Waltham.

A report from the National Treasurer's office, Mrs. Jenney, is given at each monthly meeting, showing the balance on hand. Today we report a balance of $763.58, May 1, 1938: but remember this amount must "carry on" through the fall months when money comes in slowly. "Be not weary in well doing."

The *Cheerful Letter Magazine* has been able to pay for itself the last few years, because of the Sunshine Bags, and your loyal support and interest in them and the purpose for which they were created.

Respectfully submitted,

EDITH L. JONES,
Treasurer.

CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

IT is a joy to have so many of our distant Cheerful Letter friends with us today. I wish you could come to all our meetings.

You have listened to the fine reports from the department chairmen and know what a busy year we have all had. It gives us courage to go forward, and may next year's report show even more good accomplished.

I regret to announce that our Secretary, Miss Allen, is resigning. She has been such a wonderful help to me in my first year as your Chairman, but she will stay on the Central Committee, and our Bible Chairman, Mrs. Stone, will be our new Secretary, passing on Bible responsibilities to Mrs. Bucek. Mrs. Hurst is resigning as Chairman of Correspondents and Appeals, which she has efficiently and enthusiastically carried on, but she continues as Chairman of Rural Schools and hopes to give more time to that comparatively new and worth-while Department. Miss Studley will be the New Chairman of Correspondents and Appeals and will include Home Study under the former heading.

We have lost two valued Chairmen this year,—Mrs. Henry P. Stout, of Montclair, N. J., and Mrs. Frederic W. Stone of Somerville, Mass.

If you have not all had the revised yellow booklet do take one today, for you will find it your guide, philosopher and friend. That and the *Cheerful Letter Magazine* are necessary for all who carry on this vital work. Of course you all use the yellow Sunshine bags, for the pennies put in them go to edit and publish the magazine. Many Alliances send in subscriptions so that those on our waiting list may be made happy, but those checks and the contents of the bags are for different purposes. I am emphasizing this fact for some of the new Chairmen don't understand at first.

I have spoken at West Newton and at Salem First, where they wished me to conduct a meeting as it is done at Headquarters. I took Mrs. Randall to give one of her fine library reports. She spoke at West Upton, Mrs. Hurst at Billerica Evening, and Miss Jones at Andover, Gloucester and Needham. I also spoke at Woburn and with the other Committee Chairmen at the Whitman Workshop conference.

May I make a plea for the Manual? Do be sure your names are sent in promptly. We find some Alliances have omitted even the mention of a Committee. Some mention the Committee, but not the Chairman's name. It is our address book.

We have eight new Cheerful Letter Committees, and new Chairmen of old Committees, who are keenly interested.

I thank you all for the fine work you have done this past year, and for the promptness with which you have returned the Questionnaires. They will help us in the months ahead, for we want to keep closely in touch with all our branches.

I hope many of you will come to the informal conference Friday, and bring me news of your Committees, for I am so keenly interested in all you are accomplishing.

ANNA E. SIBLEY, *Chairman.*

DEPARTMENT OF CORRESPONDENTS AND APPEALS

Sitting at my desk, surrounded by all kinds of letters and papers, files containing names of Cheerful Letter members, some of whom have been with us for over forty years, copy for the *Cheerful Letter Magazine*, and appeals from rural schools, the feeling comes to me that I am turning over to my successor a loving and interesting work, with plenty of opportunity to further this great work of ours with the shut-ins.

This Department could not carry on efficiently without the aid of an up-to-date set of files and definite policies, but after eight years of service the realization is very strong that the monthly letter to a regular correspondent proves the real value of Cheerful Letter work. The idea that somebody really cares enough to write means a great deal to these lonely shut-ins who will probably never know anybody outside of their own little world.

The objects adopted fifty years ago by a group of young women in the King's Chapel Alliance serve the Cheerful Letter Exchange today just as well as they did in years gone by. Little did this group realize how far reaching its influence would spread and how the work would enlarge year by year. This year is no exception for the reports show a very active committee of the General Alliance. Our friendly service is known the United States over, judging from the testimonials received each year, and, especially, is our cheer wanted in the highland regions of the South. Possibly the day will come when our shut-in friends will have the opportunities that they deserve through social agencies or the government, but until that time comes Cheerful Letter workers can do much to guide these people to develop their own resources through our famous name—CHEERFUL LETTER.

The General Alliance for the year 1937-1938 had 383 branches, 239 having Cheerful Letter committees. One hundred and fifty-two chairmen returned their questionnaires and according to our files 185 are credited with regular correspondents. So you see there still are some to be heard from. It would seem that we are always checking in this Department. Eighty-three regular correspondents have been published in the *Cheerful Letter Magazine* but not all have been adopted. It is a task to get them all satisfactorily placed. Other shut-ins not appearing in the Magazine have been taken, which, if published, would bring up the number to over one hundred. The regular correspondents to a branch number 1 to 143, New York-All Souls heading the list again. About 800 names were reported as regular correspondents. Over 5000 letters written were reported and no doubt this figure would double, if all were able to report every letter sent. Sometimes our shut-ins are unable to write, owing to sickness or the cost of postage. It has been discovered there is little time for writing in the summer months when their gardens are calling. It is very evident that our letters have proved a real joy and comfort to the shut-in who is deprived of any other glimpse of the outside world. One chairman wrote, "I am giving up the chairmanship but shall keep all my correspondents. I have been writing for so long that I should miss hearing from them."

Christmas was our banner time this year, over five hundred pieces of mail being sent somewhere. Postage comes high in this work of ours, both for the Department and for the worker.

"Do you send a piece of mail monthly?" was answered in various ways. Some workers intersperse their letters with *The Pathfinder, Readers Digest, Good Housekeeping, McCalls, Farmer's Wife, Country Gentleman, Needlecraft, Gardening, The Christian Register*, funnies every week from the Sunday paper to the children of the family, books, *National Geographic*, pictorial magazines and newspapers, so in this way, they are sending "something" to their correspondents monthly.

One hundred and twenty-four Appeals were published and the questionnaire

shows over 900 packages were sent. Our largest Christmas work of any year goes down on our records. We certainly were Santa Claus' right hand ladies! For the first time we published an "Approved List of Articles" in the November Magazine. This was very helpful to our workers and shut-ins and brought forth all sorts of appeals from the shut-ins. The most popular requests were for dictionaries and scissors. Clothing is listed by a few chairmen. We are grateful for their honesty and will write them later about our rules and try for a better understanding on this subject. The workers still confuse our work with that of Social Service. One chairman reports that she takes the Magazine to the Alliance meeting soon after its arrival. Usually several of their small group select some one to whom they will send something, the chairman answering one or two herself. Another branch chairman reports that her committee has answered nearly every Appeal published since September 1937.

Many find it more convenient to subscribe for a magazine for their correspondent and less expensive than mailing from their home. One hundred seventy-five subscriptions have been given.

The number of books sent to regular correspondents reveals the large total of 2500. This does not include any books sent to the rural schools.

Greater interest has been shown by thirty-five committees in needs of the rural schools. Some new schools have been added and some dropped because the teacher has been promoted to an elementary school. A total of two hundred bundles and cartons have been sent to these poorly equipped teachers. They have been supplied with globes, wall maps, erasers, all kinds of books, victrolas, mimeograph machines, and many other useful articles. These teachers have been able to carry on their work under better conditions because of the interest and cooperation of Alliance members. I plan to continue with this end of the work under the new Department Chairman of Correspondents and Appeals.

The following letter is a sample of the kind of response we get from most every teacher:—"I am mailing the questionnaire properly filled out and this note is to tell you how deeply grateful I am for the help offered my school by the Cheerful Letter Exchange. The Exchange is aptly named, and seems almost too good to be true, like a pleasant dream from which we hate to 'wake. Again let me say that it is lovely to be the teacher of an adopted school. I am delighted."

The questionnaires asked the amount of money allotted to the local committee for its work. The amount reported is $1500. This is only a tentative figure because in a great many places the chairman and her workers supply the money from their own purses and keep no record. It might be interesting to know how some of the committees finance this work. Some earn all their own expenses by having covered dish luncheons at ten cents for each committee member. Another held a silver tea, tied a quilt and earned $46.44. Card parties are ever in demand and penny sales have been held. A Cheerful Letter mite box proves successful in one branch and at every Alliance meeting all members are asked to contribute toward the Cheerful Letter work. Another Alliance gives a little bag to each member for contributions toward the Christmas package expense. Notices in church calendars and tables at church fairs bring in added revenue. So the expense is covered and the letters and packages find their way into the homes of the correspondents and to the deserving school teachers.

Many prefer to do their Cheerful Letter work in another way. Magazines, cards and pictures are collected and distributed to neighboring homes and hospitals, and especially to children's hospitals. Appropriate cards are sent to local shut-ins. Fifty branches reported as having taken part in this local work.

These questionnaires, a new venture for this Department this year, gave me

much pleasure. It moved me to realize that YOU and I together have accomplished all this fine work. My service has taught me many things, but the foremost is sharing. Selfishness has no place in Cheerful Letter work. Also it has brought me many friends, some of whom I shall never see. Pressed flowers, cards, embroidery, crocheting, rugs, nuts, spiritual references, and other gifts have been received and always will hold a memorable place in my heart. I shall miss all my shut-ins and right now I wonder how I ever can give them up. I leave the Department feeling that our Cheerful Letter Exchange is stronger and healthier than ever before, and in excellent hands. My thanks and best wishes go to all Cheerful Letter workers who have helped me in any way, and many have been the helpers! A letter came to me recently from a shut-in friend telling of a serious illness in her family and she wrote about the blessings the *Cheerful Letter Magazine* — "how correctly titled"—had been to her family all these years. It had also taught her to "do for others" and "to live for God."

Speaking of the Magazine I would like to register my sincere thanks to Mrs. Ducey, our editor, who has been so kind and patient with all my Cheerful Letter copy.

I leave these thoughts with you—you hold in your hands the opportunity to guide these shut-ins with inspiration and education, and also in your hands is the power to share, so often mentioned as *wisdom in giving*—kind deeds made into what the Cheerful Letter Exchange calls "sunshine."

Respectfully submitted,
LAURA M. HURST,
Chairman.

LIBRARY DEPARTMENT

IT gives me pleasure to present the annual report of the Library Department, to tell you of our progress and success, to ask your help in solving our difficulties, in meeting our problems. I think that the greatest, at least the first problem, is to justify our cause. Why send, particularly, why send so much to the South? "It is so far away; it costs so much. Our Alliance hasn't any money," so many people are apt to say. We may not have the money, but we do have opportunity, and it is such opportunity that makes us appreciate the need of reading matter in places where the people are so much less fortunate than we. This state of Massachusetts alone spends twice as much per capita for public library service as Virginia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi combined. And these are the states where many of our books go. Where the need is greatest is where the Cheerful Letter sends. There are forty-five million Americans without public library service,—Americans who need this kind of education to help keep this the land of the free, the home of the brave. Tell us what people are reading and we will tell you what our chances are for the future of the nation. Our work does not stop here either. Practically every ship leaving the port of Boston alone carries our books and magazines. These sailors are bound for the seven seas. Cheerful Letter reading matter may well be doing far greater good in the world than many of us realize.

For those who can not participate in the building of opportunity in more remote places, there is always work to be done near at hand. We specialize in placing good reading matter where we are convinced it will do the most good. Our own local public libraries are often glad to receive our help, glad to get good books which they would otherwise not have, to have subscriptions to good magazines which are out of reach of their budgets. Help the library department in your own schools. They always need more, always welcome the very latest word on a given subject. Collect for hospital use the used magazines of your members and friends. Keep the library tables filled in the reading rooms of your social centers. Encourage the readers to take the magazines home. Thus may good reading take the place of poor. Work through the agen-

cies already established. They know their clientele. They know where the need is greatest. Our problem is one of collection.

Many dollars have been given me, the use for which was designated in most cases.

All appeals have received attention, most of them have been bountifully cared for. They are all interesting. One wants an encyclopedia, another needs hymn books. One can use an endless amount of books at any reading level. One library was burned. A great many want juvenile literature. Some need late books on technical subjects. Some need any text books we can send. Some write that they have all they need for the present. And the letters of thanks are filled with gratitude. It is surprising, really, to weigh their thanks against our efforts. We get back what we give in this world, in another coin, with something added.

Another problem seems to be the matter of reporting. I appreciate your telling me what you are doing from time to time, so that I may the more wisely direct the placement of material as it comes in. In that way some of the more appealing appeals do not get all the attention, and the less attractive but just as deserving go unrecognized. It is a chore sometimes to count the numbers, but how otherwise can I tell you how we compare with former years? Your present figures tabulate into an imposing total. Sixty branches active this year, against fifty-three of last year, forty-three of two years ago. Twenty-four branches active this year which are either new or are again active after a lapse. It gives us pleasure to find them on the list as well as the old stand-bys. Books have been sent into twenty-three states, the same as usual, but with one hundred and fifty-seven different addresses against one hundred and thirty-two of last year, one hundred and twenty-eight of two years ago. Sixty new cards are in the files against forty-two of last year, forty-one of the year before. Twenty-five thousand two hundred and eighty-five mazagines have been distributed, nearly twice as many as last year. Four thousand three hundred and fifty-three more books sent this year than last, making a total for this year of ten thousand eight hundred and forty volumes. This is a great accomplishment which brings me a tremendous satisfaction, and I may add, a tremendous responsibility, for ten thousand books is a great deal to have on one's mind.

Respectfully submitted,
LILLIAN W. RANDALL,
Chairman.

HOME STUDY DEPARTMENT

THE work of the Home Study Department has progressed in a satisfactory way throughout the year, with appreciative pupils and enthusiastic teachers numbering about the same as last year. During the coming year I shall communicate with those local branches which offered to locate teachers.

My thanks are due to those local branches which have given financial contributions to the department, to the teachers who have given of their time and interest, and to the chairman and other officers of the Cheerful Letter Exchange who have helped with their advice and support.

Respectfully submitted,
ETHEL H. STUDLEY,
Chairman.

BIBLE DEPARTMENT

During the past year all requests for Bibles, except duplicates, have been answered by the Committee. In all, fifty Bibles, some Testaments, Books of Psalms and two family Bibles have been reported sent. The Chairmen reporting range from Colorado to Maine.

I presume many Branches who have not reported have sent Bibles. Some have not kept count of the number sent. The work is work well done even if not reported, and many, many thanks for that work; but each Committee likes to have a thorough report of all that has been done, and to give credit when credit is due.

If the work accomplished is ever so little, or not any at all, when those tire-

some questionnaires reach you about next April, if you will be willing to cooperate by answering and returning to sender you will be doing the Chairman a great favor, and helping to report the work as a whole.

If any Branch has requests for Bibles and feels unable to fill them, will you notify the Chairman, as many times some other good Branch or individual will take care of the matter or the Committee will do so.

EFFIE D. STONE, *Chairman.*

BUSY BEES

CONSIDER the case of the rheumatic gentleman who infuriated a colony of honey-bees. He learned, speedily, the futility of trying to outrace insects which can fly at a speed of sixty miles an hour.

Nursing his stings, the victim was startled to discover, as the painful swellings subsided, that his rheumatic twinges vanished with them. Had the poison in the bee stings cured his rheumatism? Doctors investigated, decided that the virus had therapeutic properties, and the bee-sting market has been booming ever since for Foster A. Lockhart, the bee man of Lake George, New York. He receives $25 a thousand for bee stings which are ground into a rheumatism remedy.

Mr. Lockhart ships his bee stings to manufacturing pharmacists in New York City, who transfer them to bottles, a few at a time, annoy them, get them thoroughly angry to fill the poison sac of the stinger with virus. Then the tiny, barbed, needle-like sting is removed, the small poison sac separated. To one ounce of sugar of milk, 160 poison sacs are added, ground into a trituration which is taken by mouth to alleviate rheumatism twinges.

Beekeepers in the United States ship from 15,000 to 75,000 bees through the mails annually. Queen bees are mailed in two-room and kitchenette apartments contained in a piece of wood four inches long, an inch deep and an inch wide.

Three circular connecting rooms are bored in the wood as living-quarters for the queen and the retinue of fifteen worker attendants who must accompany her to feed and take care of the aristocrat. The kitchenette contains a slab of cream candy mixed with honey. Another room is a living-compartment; the third room has holes punched in the walls for ventilation should the living-room become too stuffy. This housekeeping arrangement carries the queen and her retinue in complete comfort on journeys of 6,000 miles or longer.

Did you waste a single drop of honey on your breakfast pancakes this morning? Then you set at naught the labor of 3,000 bees who made tedious trips to a clover blossom to get that precious drop.

Short-lived, the bee never lives to eat the honey it gathers. It consumes honey stored by a preceding generation; its own honey is bequeathed to generations yet to come—or to invading man.

A beehive is a perfect matriarchy, the queen bee laying claim to the title of the greatest mother in the world. Every one of the 50,000 inhabitants of the hive is her offspring. The queen is the only perfectly developed female in the hive. The workers are partially developed females. Truly regal, the queen deigns not even to feed herself; that is the task of a dozen worker attendants who swarm about her, taking care of every want. The queen's life is an incessant round of egg-laying; on her fecundity depends the life, safety and happiness of the hive. The worker bee lives but six weeks in the busy summer-time, the queen from three to five years, during which she lays 1,500,000 eggs.

Worker bees in the average hive die at the rate of 1,000 a day; 2,000 new ones hatch daily. From May to September, the active period of the hive, the queen lays 2,000 eggs every twenty-four hours, eats three times her own weight in food daily. Her attendants range around her in a circle, all facing the queen as dictated by court custom, leading her respectfully over the honeycomb cells which have been prepared to receive the eggs which will hatch into workers, drones or queens.

Into small hexagonal wax cells the queen deposits eggs which will develop into worker bees. Into slightly larger hexagonal cells go the eggs which will become drones (males). Yet a third type of cell is prepared for the incubation of queens; it is circular rather than hexagonal. The cells are made from beeswax, secreted in paired pockets on the under-side of the last four segments visible on the abdomen of the bee. Secreted wax hardens as it comes in contact with air, is used to form the marvelously precise hexagons of the comb which bee engineers ages ago developed as the strongest and least space-consuming structure known to geometricians.

Crime waves in the bee world require an efficient police organization within the hive. Fifteen to twenty bee policemen stand guard at the entrance to the hive. A stranger without the hive door, seeking entrance, is turned away or stung to death. Slyly human, the bee traffic officers make one exception: if the stranger comes bearing a gift of honey, he is permitted to enter and leave unmolested—but retribution is swift if he tries to carry honey out of the hive.

G men of the hives have their troubles with "Baby Face" bumbles who lead bee hijackers and racketeers on ruthless forays. A hive of 50,000 bees which have little honey will attack a colony of 20,000 bees, kill the queen bee, force the provident but vanquished workers to carry their own honey to the predatory hive, and then drive the victims out to starve to death.

Stationed near the bee police at the hive entrance is a special squad of air-conditioning engineers. These insect specialists flap their wings, create air currents which ventilate the hive, speed the evaporation of water from honey in the storage-cells. In the winter Mr. Lockhart stores his hives in a cellar. When it gets too cold the bees can raise the temperature twenty degrees in ten minutes by fanning their wings. Bee undertakers carry the bodies of deceased brothers out of the hive every morning.

During the swarming season bees reveal most amazingly the intricate functioning of instinct. Quality of food determines whether an egg shall become a queen or a worker bee. Queens are fed bee-jelly by their nursemaids, workers receive bee-bread, which is largely pollen scraped from the hairy legs of worker bees. The old queen departs with her retinue, leaves the hive to the newly hatched queen.

The virgin queen prowls around looking for the cells of unhatched queens. If the hive population is small, swarming inadvisable, the newly hatched queens battle to the death, the fittest remaining to take charge of the hive as ruthless dictator.

When the hive is large enough to swarm, bees leave the colony in clouds to follow their new queen. They gather in great clusters, clinging to one another's bodies, on tree limbs, fence posts, almost any near-by object, and the alert beekeeper must have a new hive ready to entice them into.

Installed in her new home with her 25,000 followers, the new queen departs, one bright summer afternoon, on her mating journey. She is followed by the male bees, the drones, who do no work, store no honey, whose sole purpose is to fertilize the queen. Higher and higher she flies, thousands of the drones dropping behind, until at last only the strongest remains. He fertilizes the queen, and dies; his fellow drones, their usefulness ended, are barred from the hive and also die. The queen returns to the hive, entering upon her incessant, single-minded function of egg-laying.

"If the queen bee fails to come back from her mating flight by sundown, the whole hive sets up a wail of wo," says Mr. Lockhart. "It is a piteously mournful monotone holding all the misery of life that has been doomed to premature death. Without the queen there can be no continuation of life in the hive."

Each day the worker bee makes from six to eight trips to nectar-bearing flowers, never sleeping, never ceasing to work. Hence "busy as a bee."

— *Literary Digest*

WITH OUR BOYS AND GIRLS

THE COACH'S CHOICE

(*Concluded*)

To win the season's last game with their nearest neighbor and long-time rival, Continental College, was the great ambition of every player on the team, and of every student at the College of Eudora. A fine record of earlier victories for each team promised a struggle worth coming many snowy miles to see.

"Put in as much time as you can on the long shots now, Paul," Coach Henry counselled a few days before the game.

"But you know I can't—" Paul began.

The coach was not to be interrupted. "Remember that C of E is depending on you," he concluded, and turned to his work with the other players.

A bit mystified, Paul followed his mentor's instructions. Coach Henry seemed to have forgotten something.

On the evening of the game with Continental, the big Mason Gymnasium was filled to overflowing. In the visitors' section an enthusiastic crowd loudly proclaimed their confidence in a victory for old gold and white, while the crimson pennants of Eudora floated proudly over a wildly cheering throng.

Then came the hushed silence of expectancy that marks the beginning of a game. Never, thought the host of spectators, had two teams been more evenly matched. Back and forth, back and forth, across the court the players struggled, with few goals on either side. It seemed to be the one desire of Continental. without actually violating the rules, to keep Paul Winstead from scoring with his quick, short, accurate throws.

At the end of the first half the score board showed eight points for Eudora and nine for Continental.

During the intermission, Coach Henry outlined the next period's play in a few sharp commands.

"Take long shots, Paul, and put the ball into the circle! And you, Harry Manville, stick closer to your man! Get up on your toes, Ted—"

"But, Coach Henry—" Paul Winstead put out a protesting hand.

The coach brushed him aside as the referee's whistle called the players back on to the court.

Closer than ever, Continental's best guard hovered over Paul Winstead, pressing him farther and farther from the coveted basket. Over and over, the signals sent the ball whirling into Paul's hands. And always he sought for a red-and-white player to whom he could toss it. He was too far away to risk a try at the basket. He would only fail and then the fellows would think less of him than ever. He would be a reckless "grandstander," whose wild throws had lost the game.

Gradually the Continental team was gaining. With the score at fifteen to eleven, and ten minutes to play, the C of E center knocked the ball into Paul's unwilling hands. Vainly he looked for an unprotected crimson player to receive it. Something snapped to decision in his brain. Of course he could not make it, and the fellows would hold him in derision, but at least he could try—he would do his best for C of E! The ball rose in a great shining arc, against the blurred faces thirty feet away at the end of the floor, and dropped smoothly into the basket.

New life surged into Eudora's players in a sudden joyous tide. The basket-ball machine began to work at last, fast and furiously, with Paul a well-used cog. Again and again, from the center of the court, the ball sped from his practiced fingers, sometimes falling short, but more often gliding down into the circle, giving his team a lead that Continental could not break. Eudora won the game by a score of twenty to sixteen.

As the crowd passed out of the gymnasium, Paul Winstead's success was cheered to the echo. But the tired boy who hurried off to the locker room did not hear. He was conscious only of a hard task ended—he was free at last from this place of bitter memories.

Paul was not prepared for the eager

circle of boys that gathered around him, with outstretched hands and ringing words of congratulation.

"You did it, Paul!"

"We owe the game to you!"

"Boy, we're proud to have you on the team!"

It was Ted Mercer who offered the first word of explanation. "We thought you were a soft-snapper, Paul—afraid to try anything hard!"

Coach Henry's smiling face appeared in the doorway. "How about it, Paul?" he asked, genially. "Who said your eyes weren't good enough for the game?"

"I thought you had forgotten my handicap," Paul answered.

"You see, boys," Coach Henry explained, laying his arm across Paul's shoulders, "this fellow is so near-sighted he thought he couldn't play basket-ball. At first he tried wearing his glasses but that didn't work very well. He was so accurate on the short throws we had to have him on the team. I thought it best not to tell the rest of you about his handicap. I didn't want to shake your confidence in anyone."

"But you had me practice—" Paul began.

"I know," Coach Henry went on. "I was sure that Continental's whole game would be to keep Paul from scoring. So I just thought we'd fool them a trifle. You've been such a first-class player all, along, Paul, I knew you'd send the ball home even if you couldn't see the basket very well."

"The practicing did it," Paul answered. "I learned to gauge the distance from the center of the court."

At the door, Paul found Lynn Stanfield waiting. "I'm coming back to the Pep Chapel next Tuesday," Lynn informed him, "to see you receive the Dorman Cup."

"The Dorman Cup!" Paul laughed happily. "Why, Lynn, I'd forgotten all about that cup. What makes you think I'll get it?"

"Of course you'll be the winner," Lynn assured him. "You're *everybody's* choice."

—Courtesy of *The Beacon.*

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES

Charade: Sheep - skin.

Word Square:

s w a t
h e r o
a r m y
m e s s

THE PLOWBOY

THE story is told of a plowboy and the Duke of Wellington which should make one appreciate the importance of being faithful to a trust, of being capable of reliability.

Fox hunters riding over one's crops often bring great damage to them. A group of fox hunters were entering the gate to a farm when the owner ordered the plowboy to go stop them.

The plowboy rushed to the gate and closed it just as the first horseman reached it.

"Open the gate," he commanded, but the boy refused, explaining that his master had ordered him not to let anyone pass through.

"Open the gate or I will thrash you," the rider thundered, drawing back his whip.

"I am sorry, but I cannot. I'm only obeying my master's orders."

A second hunter offered the plowboy a sovereign to open the gate. This was a real temptation, for sovereigns to him were rare. Yet, he refused.

The hunting party was greatly annoyed by this time. A stately gentleman rode up and addressed the plowboy: "You do not know me, I am sure. I am a man not in the habit of being refused. I am the Duke of Wellington, and I command you to open the gate and let me and my friends pass."

The boy was proud to be addressed by the great soldier for he had heard of him and of his great victories in battle. But not even the great soldier could swerve him from carrying out his master's orders.

"I am sure," he said, once he could find

his voice, "the Duke of Wellington would not want me to disobey my master's orders. I must keep this gate shut. I cannot allow you to pass without my master gives his permission."

The Duke of Wellington raised his hat. "Gentlemen," he said to his friends, "take off your hats; we have found a boy who can neither be bribed nor frightened into disobeying orders. With an army of such soldiers, I could conquer the world!"

—J. EDMUND BREWTON in *Boy's Comrade.*

Religion is the first beautiful companion that man encountered in his wilderness. It is the pathway between life and death that is worn deepest by the feet of the perpetually seeking generations. It is never far away when man knows exultation and rapture. It is always present when he transcends himself in unearthly consecrations. It opens the door of vision when his genius hungers and thirsts for the substance behind all symbols, and other hand that can open it there is none. It is by his side when he walks the high and lonely places where he makes the discovery of himself. In life it is with him, illuminating him at his noblest, scourging him at his basest —the latter presence even more wistfully loved than the former. Neither in death does it leave him, but when all other voices moan of irreparable defeat, it alone lifts the cry of defiance and stands on the ruins of mortality announcing mysterious and splendid victory for the fallen. —*From the writings of William L. Sullivan.*

May the Giver of all that is joyous,
All that is lovely and true,
Select from His bounteous treasure
The richest of blessings for you!

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

MISS ANNA E. SIBLEY, *Chairman*, 82 Browne Street, Brookline, Mass.
MRS. H. LEWIS STONE, *Secretary*, 159 Union Street, Randolph, Mass.
MISS EDITH L. JONES, *Treasurer*, 11 Dana Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Meetings at 25 Beacon Street, Boston, at 10.30 A.M. the first Friday of each month from October to May inclusive.

ITS PURPOSE

To cheer and comfort those who are ill, lonely, or discouraged, and to give to those living far from a church some of the inspiration of the printed word by the publication of one good sermon, or similar article in each issue of the *Cheerful Letter Magazine.* Only such simple religious truths and principles as are agreed upon by all churches are printed.

To help those who live far from schools, or who wish to continue their studies by means of correspondence with a teacher.

To establish Circulating Libraries in isolated communities, schools, and colleges in rural and mountain districts where public libraries and other educational privileges are not available.

WHERE TO WRITE

Letters containing subscriptions to the paper, fifty cents a year, and *money from the Sunshine Bags* should be sent to the Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Checks or postal orders should be made payable to the Cheerful Letter Exchange.

Letters asking for correspondents and appeals to be printed in the *Cheerful Letter Magazine, also letters asking for help in studying at home* should be sent to Miss Ethel H. Studley, 56 School Street, Hingham, Mass. Anyone, young or old, who is unable to continue work at an educational center may become a correspondent.

Letters about the establishment of Circulating Libraries should be sent to Mrs. Neal D. Randall, *Chairman,* 12 Stearns Street, Westwood, Mass. A Circulating Library will be started in any small community that is in need of one, if proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references given.

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